

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

ANTHONY LANZILOTE,

Plaintiff,

- against -

CITY FARM PRESENTS, LLC

Defendant.

Docket No. 1L18-cv-6851

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

COMPLAINT

Plaintiff Anthony Lanzilote (“Lanzilote” or “Plaintiff”) by and through his undersigned counsel, as and for his Complaint against Defendant City Farm Presents, LLC (“City Farm” or “Defendant”) hereby alleges as follows:

NATURE OF THE ACTION

1. This is an action for copyright infringement under Section 501 of the Copyright Act; and for the removal and/or alteration of copyright management information under Section 1202(b) of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. This action arises out of Defendant’s unauthorized reproduction and public display of a copyrighted photographs of wedding parties, owned and registered by Lanzilote, a professional photographer. Accordingly, Lanzilote seeks monetary relief under the Copyright Act of the United States, as amended, 17 U.S.C. § 101 *et seq.*

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

2. This claim arises under the Copyright Act, 17 U.S.C. § 101 *et seq.*, and this Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1338(a).

3. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant because Defendant resides in and/or transacts business in New York.

4. Venue is proper in this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b).

PARTIES

5. Lanzilote is a professional photographer in the business of licensing his photographs to online and print media for a fee having a usual place of business at 120127 Saint Aubin Street, Hamtramck, MI 48212.

6. Upon information and belief, City Farm is a domestic limited liability duly organized and existing under the laws of the State of New York, with a place of business 168 7th Street, Suite 1A, Brooklyn, NY 11215. Upon information and belief City Farm is registered with the New York Department of State Division of Corporations to do business in the State of New York. At all times material, hereto, City Farm has owned and operated a website at the URL: www.thebellhouseny.com and www.venuereport.com (the “Websites”).

STATEMENT OF FACTS

A. Background and Plaintiff’s Ownership of the Photographs

7. Lanzilote photographed wedding parties (the “Photographs”). A true and correct copy of the Photographs is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

8. Lanzilote is the author of the Photographs and has at all times been the sole owner of all right, title and interest in and to the Photographs, including the copyright thereto.

9. These Photographs were registered with the United States Copyright Office and was given registration numbers VA 2-115-967 and was titled “7.23.17 - wedding.jpg.” The remaining photographs were registered under VA 2-100-117 and titled “alanzilote_0012.jpg,” “alanzilote_0009.jpg,” “alanzilote_0014.jpg,” and “alanzilote_0013.jpg.” See Exhibit B.

B. Defendant's Infringing Activities

10. On or about February 20, 2018, City Farm ran an article on the Website titled *WEDDING PHOTO ALBUM wedding @thebellhouseny.com*. See URL <https://www.thebellhouseny.com/files/2017/01/Bell-House-Wedding-Photo-Album.2.20.18.pdf>. The article prominently featured the Photographs. A true and correct copy of the article is attached hereto as Exhibit C.

11. In an article titled *The Bell House is a magnificent two-room music and events venue located in the Gowanus section of Brooklyn* City Farm posted on their website <https://www.venuereport.com/venue/the-bell-house/?mst=> prominently featured the Photographs. See Exhibit D.

12. City Farm did not license the Photographs from Plaintiff for its articles, nor did City Farm have Plaintiff's permission or consent to publish the Photographs on its Website.

FIRST CLAIM FOR RELIEF
(COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT AGAINST DEFENDANT)
(17 U.S.C. §§ 106, 501)

13. Plaintiff incorporates by reference each and every allegation contained in Paragraphs 1-12 above.

14. City Farm infringed Plaintiff's copyright in the Photographs by reproducing and publicly displaying the Photographs on the Website. City Farm is not, and has never been, licensed or otherwise authorized to reproduce, publically display, distribute and/or use the Photographs.

15. The acts of Defendant complained of herein constitute infringement of Plaintiff's copyright and exclusive rights under copyright in violation of Sections 106 and 501 of the Copyright Act, 17 U.S.C. §§ 106 and 501.

16. Upon information and belief, the foregoing acts of infringement by Defendant have been willful, intentional, and purposeful, in disregard of and indifference to Plaintiff's rights.

17. As a direct and proximate cause of the infringement by the Defendant of Plaintiff's copyright and exclusive rights under copyright, Plaintiff is entitled to damages and Defendant's profits pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 504(b) for the infringement.

SECOND CLAIM FOR RELIEF
INTEGRITY OF COPYRIGHT MANAGEMENT INFORMATION AGAINST
DEFENDANT
(17 U.S.C. § 1202)

18. Plaintiff incorporates by reference each and every allegation contained in Paragraphs 1-17 above.

19. Upon information and belief, City Farm intentionally and knowingly removed copyright management information identifying Plaintiff as the photographer of the Photographs.

20. The conduct of City Farm violates 17 U.S.C. § 1202(b).

21. Upon information and belief, City Farm's falsification, removal and/or alteration of the aforementioned copyright management information was made without the knowledge or consent of Plaintiff.

22. Upon information and belief, the falsification, alteration and/or removal of said copyright management information was made by City Farm intentionally, knowingly and with the intent to induce, enable, facilitate, or conceal their infringement of Plaintiff's copyright in the Photographs. City Farm also knew, or should have known, that such falsification, alteration and/or removal of said copyright management information would induce, enable, facilitate, or conceal their infringement of Plaintiff's copyright in the Photographs.

23. As a result of the wrongful conduct of City Farm as alleged herein, Plaintiff is entitled to recover from City Farm the damages, that he sustained and will sustain, and any gains, profits and advantages obtained by City Farm because of their violations of 17 U.S.C. § 1202, including attorney's fees and costs.

24. Alternatively, Plaintiff may elect to recover from City Farm statutory damages pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 1203(c) (3) in a sum of at least \$2,500 up to \$25,000 for each violation of 17 U.S.C. § 1202.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests judgment as follows:

1. That Defendant City Farm be adjudged to have infringed upon Plaintiff's copyrights in the Photographs in violation of 17 U.S.C §§ 106 and 501;
2. The Defendant City Farm be adjudged to have falsified, removed and/or altered copyright management information in violation of 17 U.S.C. § 1202.
3. That Plaintiff be awarded Plaintiff's actual damages and Defendant's profits, gains or advantages of any kind attributable to Defendant's infringement of Plaintiff's Photographs;
4. That, with regard to the Second Claim for Relief, Plaintiff be awarded either:
 - a) Plaintiff's actual damages and Defendant's profits, gains or advantages of any kind attributable to Defendant's falsification, removal and/or alteration of copyright management information; or b) alternatively, statutory damages of at least \$2,500 and up to \$ 25,000 for each instance of false copyright management information and/or removal or alteration of copyright management information committed by Defendant pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 1203(c);

5. That Defendant be required to account for all profits, income, receipts, or other benefits derived by Defendant as a result of its unlawful conduct;
6. That Plaintiff be awarded his costs, expenses and attorneys' fees pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 1203(b);
7. That Plaintiff be awarded punitive damages for copyright infringement;
8. That Plaintiff be awarded attorney's fees and costs;
9. That Plaintiff be awarded pre-judgment interest; and
10. Such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Plaintiff hereby demands a trial by jury on all issues so triable in accordance with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 38(b).

Dated: Valley Stream, New York
December 2, 2018

LIEBOWITZ LAW FIRM, PLLC

By: /s/Richard Liebowitz
Richard P. Liebowitz, Esq.
11 Sunrise Plaza, Suite 305
Valley Stream, New York 11580
Tel: (516) 233-1660
RL@LiebowitzLawFirm.com

Attorneys for Plaintiff Anthony Lanzilote